THE DRAMATIC CENSOR;

OR,

WEEKLY THEATRICAL REPORT.

NUMBER IV. Saturday, January 25, 1800.

Infelix! modo crinibus nitebas,
Phœbo pulchrior, et sorore Phœbi:
At nunc lævior ære, vel rotundo
Horti tubere, quod creavit unda,
Ridentes fugis, et times.

*** Dramatic Writers, who desire to have an *early* Review of their Publications, are requested to send a Copy to the Editor, at the Printing-Office.

DRURY-LANE, *Friday, Jan.* 14, 1800.

PIZARRO. (*Sheridan and Kotzebue*)—The HUMOURIST. (*Cobb*)

THE intrinsic merit of this play, as we observed in the first number of our work, has been already so repeatedly and so amply canvassed; and The DRAMATIC CENSOR itself has so frequently had occasion to deliver its sentiments upon the subject, that all further comment would be nugatory and impertinent. In future, therefore, we shall content ourselves with the recapitulation of the title

and the day of performance. Nor do we conceive the *Entertainment* entitled to greater honours of *detail*. Bare mention is amply ſufficient in both caſes.

COVENT-GARDEN, *Friday, Jan.* 17, 1800.

JOANNA. (*Adapted from Kotzebue, by Cumberland*)—The SPOILED CHILD. (*Mrs. Jordan*).

A VARIETY of transformations and curtailments took place on the ſecond repreſentation of this *Dramatic Romance*, (as it is expreſsly ſtyled by the author) the neceſſity of which was ſtrongly enforced upon the manager's attention, by the marked diſapprobation of the audience, on the preceding night. In fact, as the entire intereſt of the piece reſts avowedly, even by the author's own confeſſion, with the **muſic* and the *ſcenery*, every retrenchment of the dialogue may be conſidered as an improvement. As ſcenic propriety will no doubt ſuggeſt ſtill further changes, we ſhall reſerve the promiſed continuation of our *critique* on *Joanna* till *Tueſday*.

Mrs.

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* See the Prologue to *Joanna:*

" We've given him all our care---with muſic's aid,
" And painting's art, his ſplendid ſcene array'd."

And towards the cloſe we are told:

——— " Muſic now prepares
" Her *better* prologue to more moving airs."

Mrs. MILLS plays the part of *Little Pickle* with addreſs. She is lively, arch, and ſufficiently *miſchievous*; though ſhe does not exerciſe her whip of late, with that *forcible effect*, which *we* have *witneſſed*, and *others* have *felt*, on a former occaſion.

The ſpectator who can ſee Mr. KNIGHT in the character of *Tag*, without relaxing the auſterity of his features, muſt be a perfect *Cynic*.

DRURY-LANE, *Saturday, Jan.* 18, 1800.

A TRIP TO SCARBOROUGH. (*R. B. Sheridan*)—LODOISKA. (*J. P. Kemble*).

THIS play, which made its firſt appearance at Drury Lane, in 1776, is an alteration from *Sir J. Vanburgh's* pleaſant Comedy of *The Relapſe*, or *Virtue in Danger*. But, though it experienced a very flattering reception, and had a run of between twenty and thirty ſucceſſive nights, it is a production, in our humble opinion, little calculated, (if we except the praiſe of *moral decorum*, which the author has very properly conſulted by the omiſſion of the licentious ſcenes which diſgrace the original) to advance Mr. SHERIDAN's literary character. The *imitatorum ſervum pecus* is ſufficiently numerous to anſwer every purpoſe of *theatrical ſtock-jobbing*;—

a writer of Mr. SHERIDAN's talents has, therefore, no excuſe to plead for an act of voluntary *ſelf-degradation*.

Though the polite cuſtom of *ſwearing* continues as much in vogue as ever, the faſhion has notwithſtanding undergone material revolutions, with reſpect to form and *etiquette*. The ſtrange oaths which Lord *Foppington* deals forth, have now loſt all their local pertinency, and of courſe fail of the intended effect. They are too obſolete to excite a laugh. Perhaps they might be advantageouſly replaced by the improvements of modern refinement; but this is a point which we leave to the verdict of *connoiſſeurs* in the elegant ſcience of imprecation.

In the diſtribution of the various parts, which Mrs. JORDAN was in the habit of filling at Drury Lane, the comic characters have been portioned out chiefly between Miſs MELLON and Miſs DE CAMP; thoſe of the ſentimental caſt have devolved upon Miſs BIGGS. As Mrs. JORDAN's prime excellence conſiſts avowedly in the delineation of *rompiſh* characters, it would be invidious to draw a rigid compariſon between *her* ſtyle of acting, as Miſs *Hoyden*, in the *Trip to Scarborough*, and the performance of Miſs DE CAMP, who ſuſtained the part this evening, for the *firſt time*. The moſt faſtidious critic muſt allow, that even *equal powers* cannot contend

contend on *equal terms*, where *practice*, on the one ſide, is oppoſed to *inexperience*, on the other.

Mrs. WILCOT perſonated the *Nurſe*, and Mr. SURMONT appeared as the repreſentative of *La Varole*. The part belongs properly to Mr. WEWITZER, who is, without exception, the firſt *foreigner* upon the ſtage. Mr. PALMER poſſeſſes a certain *quaintneſs* of manner, which accords well with the delineation of *foppiſh* characters. Miſs MELLON diſplays much archneſs and native humour, and gains, as ſhe deſerves, conſiderably upon the public favour; though ſome of the *newſpapers* affect to carp at her, becauſe ſhe is not Mrs. JORDAN. She is a young and *improving* actreſs.

COVENT-GARDEN, *Saturday, Jan.* 18, 1800.

JOANNA (*Cumberland and Co.*)—The PRISONER AT LARGE. (*O'Keefe*).

DRURY-LANE, *Monday, Jan.* 20, 1800.

PIZARRO. (*Sheridan*)—The APPRENTICE. (*A. Murphy*).

COVENT

COVENT-GARDEN, *Monday, Jan.* 20, 1800.

JOANNA. *(Cumberland)*—THE VOLCANO. *(*Legion)*.

AMIDST the various alterations which Mr. CUMBERLAND has been induced to make in the repreſentation of his *Dramatic Romance*, he does not appear to deem grammatical propriety worthy of his attention. The ſeveral blunders and inaccuracies, which we pointed out in our laſt number, are ſuffered to remain in their original deformity, uncorrected, unimproved.

An apology was made for Mr. POPE, who it ſeems is prevented by indiſpoſition from attending to his profeſſional duties. Mr. CLAREMONT appeared as his ſubſtitute in *Albert*. The part in itſelf, is ſo trifling and deſpicable, that it is of little ſignification who performs it.

DRURY-LANE, *Tueſday, Jan.* 21, 1800.

The STRANGER. *(altered from Kotzebue)*.—The RING, OR, LOVE ME FOR MYSELF. *(Linley)*.

IF crowded houſes, mute attention, weeping eyes, and ladies fainting, are allowed to bear evidence to the

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* For an illuſtration of this epithet, conſult page 9 of the Firſt Number of the DRAMATIC CENSOR.

the intereſt of a dramatic production, *The Stranger* may lay undiſputed claim to the character of a highly affecting and pathetic play. Unaided by the meretricious attractions of *ſhow* and *ſing-ſong*, it reſts its pretenſions entirely on the forcible appeal it makes to the heart. Though far from a faultleſs piece, conſidered in reference to the plot and management of the fable, which abounds in abſurdities, improbabilities, and contradictions; the ſeveral ſcenes in their detached ſtate, are well wrought, and maſterly adapted to agitate the paſſions.

Yet, with all its intrinſic merit, it muſt be granted, that the *Stranger* ſtands chiefly indebted for its extraordinary ſucceſs, to the exquiſite acting of Mr. KEMBLE and Mrs. SIDDONS. Had this Drama, in the very form in which it at preſent appears, been got up at the other houſe, with Mrs. POPE, for the repreſentative of *Mrs. Haller*, and her huſband, or Mr. HOLMAN, as the proxy for the *Stranger*, we are convinced the play would have incurred the moſt imminent riſk of damnation. Or, had it happily ſucceeded in weathering the ſtorm, no perſon of taſte would have gone a *ſecond time* to witneſs its performance.

The play was ſucceeded by a wretched attempt to *abrogate the authority of the public verdict*, by reſuſcitating from the gulph of oblivion, a miſerable abortion

abortion, which ſeveral months ago had received its merited ſentence of condemnation, after a fair and candid *Trial by Jury*. This glaring outrage of law and uſage; this atrocious infraction of the *people's rights*, met, we are happy to add, with ſpirited and triumphant reſiſtance. Not all the arts of *play-houſe chicanery*; not all the ſtratagems employed by brainleſs authors, and their venal adherents to procure a *packed jury* of *clapping friends*, were competent to repeal the ſentence of *outlawry*, already denounced againſt the culprit. His former doom was ratified and confirmed with circumſtances of aggravated infamy and diſgrace.

We rejoice the more ſincerely in this event, as it affords an incontrovertible proof that the taſte of the town is not yet ſo *irremediably debauched*, as to leave no hopes of *reformation*. It muſt now be evident to the wretched *junto* of *opera-mongers*, that they ſtand on ſlippery ground, and that the public will not always be *gulled* to eſteem the *ſacrifice of ſenſe a cheap compenſation for ſhow and ſound!* We truſt the fate of *The Ring* will operate as a ſalutary warning and *memento*, both to managers and playwrights—(the former, in fact, are the moſt culpable, ſtanding with reſpect to the dull ſcribblers whom they patronize, exactly in the ſame predicament, as does a *receiver of ſtolen goods to the wretch who committed the robbery*—we all know what deſtinction the law makes between them)—how they trifle

trifle with the good ſenſe and principles of an audience. This caution we wiſh to impreſs more forcibly upon their attention, as we underſtand, there are two or three other muſical dramas in a ſtate of ſpeedy production, which, from a knowledge of the ſource whence they originate, we have reaſon to apprehend, will reſemble in *character*, and we hope *in fate*, the wretched *farrago* of ſong and folly, which this evening ſuffered an untimely and ignominious death on the ſcaffold of Drury Lane.

Although the public condemnation of a theatrical production abrogates, *per ſe*, the neceſſity of entering into a detail of the plot and dialogue, &c. 'tis an act of juſtice we owe to our own character, to adduce proof and teſtimony in ſupport of the ſtrong language we have made uſe of, in reprobating Mr. LINLEY's performance. In this view we ſhall briefly obſerve, that the muſical entertainment of *The Ring, or Love Me for Myſelf*, as it *was* called, was a *revival*, under a different name, of *The Pavilion*, the fate of which our readers are already fully acquainted with.

It ſeems Mr. LINLEY was ſo enamoured with his own muſic, and ſo confident of its claim to public patronage, that he dreaded committing the dreadful ſin of *hiding his talent in a napkin*, if he ſuffered a compoſition of ſuch ſuperlative excellence to

periſh, merely becauſe a capricious audience had thought proper to adminiſter a *quietus*. At the ſame time, *feeling* the indelicacy of *cramming a ſtinking morſel down the public throat*; and calculating not unwiſely on the little chance he had of *forcing the public to ſwallow ſuch unſavoury fare*, he bethought himſelf of an expedient, which he flattered himſelf would remove all obſtacles, on the part of the audience, and relieve his own mind from the delicate ſcruples under which he laboured. This was to vamp up his ill-fated entertainment; and after making a few trifling alterations, without giving himſelf the leaſt concern, whether they came under the denomination of improvements, or deteriorations, paſs his bantling through the theatrical waters of regeneration, and bring it out under a new and impoſing title. Two additional ſongs were added, by way of ſpice, to beguile the appetite, facilitate digeſtion, and make "the precious morſel ſlip gently down."

The ſcene of action is laid, as in the *Pavilion*, at Bagdad. *Almeria*, the heroine of the piece, is a native of *Balſora*, where her beauty kindles the flame of love in the boſom of a young merchant, named, *Agib*, which ſoon becomes reciprocal, on her part. *Agib* being ſuddenly recalled by buſineſs of great importance to Bagdad, preſents his miſtreſs with a *Ring*, which he informs her poſſeſſes extraordinary virtues, to relieve her in all caſes of extremity, from man's oppreſſion.

Almeria

Almeria reſolves to go in queſt of her lover, but is perſecuted by the addreſſes of the king of Balſora. She eſcapes, however, and with her faithful ſervant, *Haſſan*, arrives at Bagdad, in whoſe company ſhe repairs directly, as the moſt likely place to meet with a merchant, to the gardens of the *Caliph*. This treſpaſs, ſhe and her follower are doomed to atone for with their lives. But after her conſtancy has been ſufficiently put to the teſt, in a variety of ſhapes, it appears, that the *Caliph* is the identical youth, who pledged his love to her, under the aſſumed character of the merchant, *Agib*.

There is a ſort of an underplot, in which the gardener's daughter *Fetnah* falls paſſionately in love with *Haſſan*, at firſt ſight. And the old dotard of a gardener is crazy with deſire to poſſeſs an attendant of the name of *Selima*. But it were a waſte of time to enlarge on the fable, as the whole of the dialogue is nothing more than a vehicle, and that a very clumſy one, to introduce the ſongs, which are literally *lugged-in par-force*; or, at beſt, form but a comment to a wretched *pun*.

We have already remarked, that the ſcene is laid at *Bagdad*; the manners, of conſequence, ought to be *Oriental*. But to this indiſpenſible law the author pays no regard. His *Dramatis Perſonæ* are dreſſed, indeed, in the Eaſtern habit, but talk as familiarly of Engliſh cuſtoms, as if they had received a modern

education in Great Britain. The *Caliph* is accoſted by the title of *Sir! Haſſan* tells us, that the ladies are obliged to turn their *chairs*, to hide their bluſhes.

" And as the crimſon comes and goes
" With timid air,
" She turns her *chair*," &c.

Our readers, we are perſuaded, need not to be told, that *chairs*, are not in uſe in Oriental countries.

In another place, *Haſſan* ſays;

" I'll whiſtle and laugh,
" And the *Jorum* I'll quaff." &c.

And *Haddadad*, in the burleſqued character of a courtier, deſires, that his puniſhment may be put off *ſine die*.

But inſtances of ſimilar errors, inconſiſtences and violation of hiſtoric truth, multiply ſo rapidly upon us, that it would be an endleſs taſk to identify them. We ſhall, therefore, content ourſelves with ſubjoining one of the ſongs in this delectable Entertainment, which contains a blunder almoſt in every line. This ſong, (it deſerves to be remarked) is one of the *additions* and *improvements*, on which the author reſted his chief hopes of ſucceſs. It was ſung by SUETT, as *Haddadad*, and, notwithſtanding its abſurdity and folly, was *encored* by the multitude, ſuch is the bewitching power of a little *muſical jingle!*

I.

Oh! the delights of delay;
In doubt by the noſe to be led,
To *put-off* all you can for to-day,
And promiſe to-morrow inſtead.

The

The *Lawyer* conſiders his clauſe,
For a year on one ſide he'll be leaning;
Puts you off with a "for and becauſe"
'Cauſe the Devil alone knows the meaning.

2.

The Doctor, on true *college* plan,
With caution attacks the diſeaſe;
Checks Nature as long as he can,
For Nature would *put-off* his fees.—
Nor comes little *Bolus* with bill,
Till time has allow'd it to ſwell;
So, for traſh that continued you ill,
The account he *puts-off* till you're well.—

3.

The Creditor writes to my *Lord*,
And payment's that moment aſſur'd;
My Lord never forfeits his word,
For payment's *put-off* by the *Steward*.—
Life they tell me is nought but a ſpan,
And at *Death* there's no mortal ſhould ſcoff,
But I'll hum him as long as I can,
And as long as I *live—Put him off*.

We never knew before, that *Bagdad* had its *attornies* * and *barriſters*. Still leſs were we aware of the eſtabliſhment

* We truſt that none of our readers will accuſe us of ſeverity in our Remarks. If ſuch glaring abſurdities are to paſs without animadverſion; if *knowledge*, and a cultivated ſenſe of *fitneſs* and *propriety* are not to rank among the requiſites which a dramatic writer ought to be poſſeſsed of; if *nonſenſe* is to be tolerated, and *folly* careſſed, then, indeed, the ſtage is placed above the juriſdiction of criticiſm, and the Editor of THE DRAMATIC CENSOR

eſtabliſhment of a *college* of phyſicians, and that the *gentlemen of the faculty* acted preciſely on the ſame plan in Oriental countries, as in Europe:—that the medical profeſſion was duly claſſed and arranged in the ſeveral ſubdiviſions which obtain among us:—that the *Doctor* took his *fees*; and *Bolus* in due time followed with his *bill*. But our aſtoniſhment roſe ſtill higher to find that the *Lords* and *Nobles* of Bagdad managed their fortunes preciſely in the ſame manner, as Lords and Nobles do in England; and left themſelves entirely at the mercy of their *Stewards*. Theſe are valuable articles of information for which Mr. LINLEY will, doubtleſs, receive the thanks of the *Royal Society*, and, indeed, of every *Academy of Arts and Sciences* in Europe. In grateful return for theſe diſcoveries, we forbear to expatiate on the beautiful rhyme in the third Stanza.

" And payment's that moment *aſſur'd*
" For payment's *put-off* by the *Steward*."

No wonder *The Morning Poſt*, in their Report *The Ring*, ſhould ſtyle Mr LINLEY's *re-production* of of this piece "*a laudable attempt*." We cannot, however, agree with that Paper in their account of the *uniform applauſe* with which it was received, *till towards its cloſe*, by a very crowded audience. In our ears the *hiſs of condemnation* completely overpowered the

CENSOR in that caſe muſt plead guilty of a moſt unpardonable *breach of the peace* againſt the perſons of His Majeſty's loving and dutiful company of play-wrights.

the demonſtrations of *uniform applauſe*, from the *commencement* to the *end* of the performance.

Having now expatiated at ſufficient length on the defects of *The Ring* to juſtify, both the Public in paſſing a verdict of damnation, and ourſelves in reprobating its production in terms of the ſtrongeſt cenſure, we ſhall cloſe our remarks with obſerving, that Miſs STEPHENS ſuſtained the part of *Almeria*, in conſequence of the continued indiſpoſition of the original repreſentative, Mrs. CROUCH, and was honoured with very flattering marks of approbation by the audience. The reſt of the leading characters remained in the hands of the ſame performers who appeared in THE PAVILION. KELLY was even more than uſually dull and inſipid.

COVENT-GARDEN, *Tueſday, January* 21, 1800.

JOANNA. (*Cumberland.*) VOLCANO.

Agreeably to the promiſe given in our laſt, we reſume our *critique* upon the *New Play*, following the plan we then laid down for our conduct, *viz.* to give a regular detail of the incidents, as they ſeverally ſucceed each other, from ſcene to ſcene.

Act I.

The FIRST SCENE opens with a view of *Thurn* Caſtle and the adjacent country, which is highly pictureſque and beautiful, and reflects great credit on the

the artiſt. A band of peaſants, of both ſexes, aſſemble in the fore-ground, to hail the convaleſcence of their beloved Lady *Joanna*, who is ſaluted on her approach with a *Serenade*, expreſſive of their good wiſhes for her proſperity, and their profound veneration for her virtues. *Joanna* returns the compliment by *bleſſing* the congregation, having before taken care to ſend them ſome drink :—but the dialogue is in itſelf ſo *over-charged*, and the entire arrangement of the ſcene ſo ill-managed, that the interview loſes its intereſt, and produces a *farcical* and ludicrous effect.

The peaſants receive their lady's benediction with becoming gratitude, and diſperſe; on which *Lazara*, who had joined the groupe in the diſguiſe of a pilgrim, approaches *Joanna* under pretence of bringing tidings from *Adeline*, abbeſs of a convent in Savoy, in which *Joanna* paſſed her juvenile years. After delivering his meſſage, in which he appears to be more deeply intereſted than befits his character as a mere *agent*, he craves permiſſion to do *pilgrim's homage*, and dropping on his knees kiſſes *Joanna's* extended hand with a violence of paſſion, which leaves a *red and angry mark* on her fair ſkin. This circumſtance furniſhes *Joanna*, or rather her repreſentative, Mrs. POPE, with an opportunity of rolling her eyes, and ſhaking her head backwards and forwards with a rapidity of motion, which ſhe no doubt intends ſhall convey the idea of wonder and amaze, but whch certainly might be much better expreſſed by fixing her looks

on

on this ſelf-ſame *red and angry* mark, which furniſhes her with ſo much cauſe of alarm.

Lord *Albert* now enters, and after ſome *conjugal chit-chat*, in the uſual ſtyle of ſentimental wedlock, diſcloſes to his wife the important ſecret, that he is not the rightful proprietor of *Thurn*. Conſcious, that he owes his poſſeſſions to the uſurpation of his father, he anticipates impending calamities, and a day of trouble, of *whoſe* coming he has an awful warning. This idiomatic impropriety, which the author has not deigned to correct in compliance with our ſuggeſtions, is ſucceeded by a grammatical error, on the part of *Joanna*. "What avails it, when I walk beſide thee, if (*whether*) leagues or inches, &c." Probably ſhe commits this blunder to keep her dear lord in countenance.

Albert, in the next place, very *generouſly* diſmiſſes *Philip*, (the allotted time of the young man's detention being elapſed) whom he had kept as an hoſtage for his father's (*Wenzel's*) allegiance. The youth takes his leave with ſtrong proteſtations of reſpect and gratitude to the Lord and Lady of *Thurn*;—proteſtations which he afterwards proves to be ſincere by active ſervices.

The ſcene, which began to grow heavy, is now relieved by the appearance of *Wolf*, the *watch-dragon* and *draw-canſir* of the Caſtle. *Wolf*, it ſeems, being

as uſual, upon the prowl, has captured one of *Lazarra's* ſcouts, lurking in a ditch. *Wolf*—who is "only *Wolf* by *name*, not by *nature*!" as he himſelf expreſsly boaſts, can ſcarcely be prevented, even by the interference, and authoritative commands of his maſter, from butchering the poor devil on the ſpot, and very reluctantly complies with Lord *Albert's* orders to ſet him at liberty. We muſt, however, notice *one* improvement in his character, the credit of which reſts with the *audience*, not the *author*. On the firſt repreſentation of the New Play, *Wolf* rendered himſelf as notorious by his vulgarity and obſcenity, as by his brutal manners. Among other indecencies, he took the liberty of calling his priſoner, "ſaving the preſence of Lady *Joanna*, a d——d ſon of a wh—re!" The univerſal hiſs, which immediately followed this ſpeech, convinced the author of the neceſſity of cutting out *this beautiful ſtroke of wit*, which was accordingly omitted on the ſecond night. Such a powerful *controul

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* The conſequence attached to public opinion, when boldly and reſolutely declared, proves the great utility of a work conducted on the plan of THE DRAMATIC CENSOR, which by rigidly canvaſſing the merits of Theatrical productions, and expoſing *error* with determined *intrepidity*, cannot fail in many inſtances to open the eyes of the multitude, and gradually to correct the prevalence of falſe taſte. An audience always has the power of controuling the Stage; all that is wanted, therefore, to a reformation of the Drama, is to direct the public judgment in a right courſe.

has

has an audience over the conduct of writers, managers and performers, when the public chooſe to exerciſe their authority, and vindicate their right of opinion. In deference to the verdict of the ſame high tribunal, the *gallant* and *ſublime* compariſon of *women* to *cats*, "the more you *careſs* them, the more will they *ſcratch* you"— has been very properly cancelled in the ſucceeding repreſentations.

Scene II is to be conſidered merely as an *intermediate* ſcene, introduced for the expreſs purpoſe of affording a proper opportunity to prepare and duly arrange the machinery and proceſſion which uſhers in the *Third*. It is wholly engroſſed by a parting interview between *Philip* and *Eloiſa*, the *reputed* daughter of *Guntram*. The detention of the former at *Thurn* Caſtle had paved the way to his acquaintance with his miſtreſs, and a reciprocal attachment between the youthful pair follows, as the natural conſequence.

In Scene III, which is happily conceived and ably executed, we are introduced to *Darbony's* banditti. *Lazarra* throws off his pilgrim's garb, and appears in the habit and equipment of a Knight. Mr. Holman's dreſs is ſuperbly rich, and in our opinion, the beſt recommendation the character has to boaſt. The bugle horn is ſounded, as the ſignal for muſtering the troops. This ſummons is inſtantly obeyed, and a march commences, in which every

every charm, which the combined powers of muſic, and ſhow are competent to produce, are ſucceſsfully employed to faſcinate the ſenſes. It muſt, however, be acknowledged, that the general arrangement exhibits too palpable and barefaced an imitation of the march in *Blue Beard.* We likewiſe could not refrain from noticing a ludicrous circumſtance, which might eaſily be rectified. The *Bow-men,* who form part of the proceſſion, are ſo ill-equipped for combat, that many of them have not more than *one* arrow in their quiver, and ſome are totally unprovided with that weapon.

The troops having taken their allotted ſtation, *Lazarra* recapitulates his imaginary wrongs in a ſpeech, the bombaſt of which ſtrikes the ear with double force from the mouth of a performer, whoſe prominent characteriſtic is *rant.* *Darbony* puts an end to the high-flown harangue, by informing *Lazarra,* that there is no occaſion for *manifeſtoes*: "Provided they do but fight, his ſoldiers (he obſerves) are not nice about the cauſe for which they contend" He then, at the requeſt of his employer, addreſſes his ſoldiers in a martial Song, which is admirably ſet to muſic by Mr. Busby, and given by Mr. Incledon in his very beſt ſtyle. Conſidered with reſpect to diction, this ſong is the only one in the whole piece, which can lay claim to the title of a *poetical* compoſition. All the reſt of the Airs, Choruſſes, &c. are a mere ſtring of rhymes, which the

the meaneſt *verſifier* might put together, *currente calamo*. Yet even this ſong would be conſiderably improved by ſubſtituting the word *tracks*, inſtead of *marks*, in the concluding line of the firſt ſtanza.

" And ruin *tracks* our way"

Sword and *word* in the Second Stanza exhibit an inſtance of that want of *chaſteneſs of rhyme*, which has latterly become almoſt univerſally prevalent even with our beſt writers. It is by no means our intention to repreſent correctneſs of rhyme, as the prime requiſite of a Poet—we are well aware that rhyme and metre claſs among the mechanical parts of verſification; but if a rigid obſervance of propriety in this reſpect be not entitled to ſuperior praiſe, neglect and inaccuracy, on the other hand, certainly betray an unpardonable want of ſkill and attention. The man, who cannot *rhyme*, ſhould never affect the poet.

Act II. preſents us in the *opening ſcene* with the view of a range of caverns and ſubterraneous retreats, which " beſpeak a country formed for ambuſh and ſurprize." The imagery is bold, and produces a ſtriking effect. *Darbony*, in a *recitative*, the words of which afford a freſh inſtance of Mr. Cumberland's bad ear for rhyme, orders one of his ſubalterns to rally the troops:

" Soldier, ſoldier, wave your ſword,
" Give the ſign, aud paſs the word,"

The motley band inſtantly ruſh from their lurking place,

place, and after receiving inſtructions from their leader, which they anſwer with a *namby-pamby* chorus:

" Captain, Captain, ſtout and bold,
" Soldiers need not to be told, &c."

proceed to the attack.

SCENE II. diſcovers the fortifications of *Thurn* caſtle, with *Wolf* at his poſt, as centinel. Not ſatisfied with the actual ſtate of the draw-bridge, inſtead of pulling it up, he roves about in the dark in queſt of danger, the approach of which he is preſently apprized of, by the ſound of foot-ſteps and the diſtant clang of arms. Now it occurs to him to order the draw-bridge to be raiſed, the port-cullis to be let down, and the alarm-bell to be rung. But before theſe precautions can be carried into effect, *Darbony*'s gang ſtorm the Caſtle, without the ſmalleſt appearance of reſiſtance from the oppoſite party, except a little fencing by Lord *Albert*, who ruſhes out to let the invaders in, without attempting to obſtruct their entrance. *Wolf* manfully ſeconds his maſter, and fights till he falls, (apparently, from the clumſy manner in which the ſcene is managed, with deſign) when he is inſtantly ſurrounded by half a dozen of the aſſailants, who prepare to diſpatch him. But being fortunately recognized by one of the gang as the confidential ſervant of Lord *Albert*, who from his office muſt be acquainted with the place where his maſter's treaſure is depoſited, his

his life is ſpared for the preſent, though under the expreſs menace, that he ſhall be put to death when they have ſecured the ſtrong-box.

In this ſtate of forlorn hope, *Wolf* very *characteriſtically* begins to banter and crack his jokes, which in the end prove ſomething more than a *joke* to the chief of the party that has captured him, who with wonderful ſimplicity ſuffers his priſoner to lead him to the brink of the moat, into which *Wolf* precipitates him, and then repeats a freſh ſtring of *puns* and jeſts to himſelf, in the face of the enemy, not one of whom takes the trouble to moleſt him. At length, tired of uttering ſo much wit without an auditor, he deliberately ſtalks off.

In SCENE III. we have a view of an inner apartment in the Caſtle. *Darbony* greets *Lazarro* as Lord of *Thurn*, and deſires him to put up his ſword.

SCENE IV. *Lazarro* meets *Joanna* in the *Armoury*, and telling her that "her pilgrim is returned," follows up his ſucceſsful attack of the caſtle, by laying ſiege to *Albert*'s wife. *Joanna* rejects his ſuit with diſdain, and to convince him of her heroiſm as well as virtue, brandiſhes a dagger, which ſhe declares ſhall preſerve her honour inviolate, at the expence of her life. Mutual railing and reproaches enſue, till *Lazarra* at length works upon *Joanna*'s fears, by inſinuating that her Lord had fallen in the attack. *Joanna* drops down in a ſwoon on receiving

ing this intelligence, which *Lazarra* takes advantage of to diſarm her, and then commences a very edifying preachment about the Avenging Angel, who watches over *defunct* innocence, and ſtrikes with death the *man of blood*, if he approach his victim. To avoid this imminent danger he very wiſely takes himſelf off.

No ſooner is *Lazarra's* back turned, than *Joanna* recovers from her ſwoon, and laments the loſs of her dagger. A fluted pillar hung with ſwords and other weapons, both offenſive and defenſive, preſents a very ſeaſonable opportunity of repairing her loſs. She accordingly tugs at a ſword, (more like a hanger than the faulchion uſed by Knights in the Fourteenth Century) but the weapon not immediately yielding to her efforts, ſhe breaks out into a *ſentimental* ejaculation of *uncommon beauty*. "Thou art no Hero's weapon! elſe my hand, weak as it is, had brought thee down." She makes a freſh effort, which proves more ſucceſsful. The ſword gives way, ſhe graſps it in her hand, and with all the *piety of premeditated ſuicide* conjures the weapon to vindicate the honor of a widowed matron, and "ſend her hence to be a *wife in heaven*!" She is only with-held from the execution of her fatal purpoſe, by the abrupt entrance of her infant ſon.

SCENE V. is a rural proſpect, painted with taſte and elegance. *Albert* makes his appearance faint and wounded, and is met by *Wenzel*, Caſtellan of

Belmont

Belmont, who, inſtead of affording him protection, orders his attendant Forreſters to arreſt and carry him off. *Wolf* enters ſoon after, and finding himſelf hungry and weary, without food or lodging, amuſes himſelf with his old reſource of punning. After debating what ſteps it would be moſt prudent to take in his preſent diſtreſs--whether to apply to the inhabitants of the neighbourhood for relief, or not—he *very wittily* obſerves: "Theſe mountaineers would break my *neck* to catch them, and when I caught them, they will not break my *faſt*." Very luckily he ſtumbles upon the *Old Hermit*, who promiſes to give him a ſupper and a night's lodging, though his fare is coarſe and his fortune poor. "Heaven mend your for-"tune (*Wolfe* retorts) and Fortune mend your "fare!"

Act III. A view of the country conſtitutes the *Firſt Scene*. *Wolf* and the *Hermit* enter in diſcourſe together, when the latter taking himſelf off to ſee what "metal hearts are made of, on the Hills," furniſhes the *Hermit* with the ſubject of a moſt ſublime **Soliloquy*, which is avowedly intended to rival

* That our Readers may have an opportunity of exerciſing their own judgment by a compariſon of the reſpective merits of both writers, we ſubjoin a copy of the *Hermit's* ſpeech,

rival and eclipſe *Rolla's* celebrated ſpeech in *Pizarro*. But the author has woefully failed in his attempt. He appears like a *dwarf* exerting his puny efforts to wield the arms of a *giant*.

The *Hermit* having concluded his harangue is joined by *Eloiſa*, who brings him a ſupply of proviſions. At *Eloiſa's* requeſt, the *Hermit* gives the outlines of his paſt life, which not being ſketched with due caution and judgment, lead to a premature diſcloſure of the cataſtrophe. Their converſation is interrupted by the entrance of *Darbony* and *Guntram*, the former of whom, by virtue of a compact founded in reciprocal intereſt, is deſtined by her reputed father to be the huſband of *Eloiſa*. The lady in vain remonſtrates againſt a union ſo

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which we think our memory ſufficiently retentive to enable us to give with accuracy.

" Oh! loved Helvetia!--oh! my native country! How long, " ye ſons of freedom, will ye ſuffer theſe foreign hypocrites to " dwell among you? When they affect to embrace you as bre- " thren, they meditate to throw their chains about you, and " make you bondſmen. Under the pretence of moderation, " they would fain conceal monſtrous ambition, luſt inſatiable of " univerſal power, and pride ſo vaſt, that having vowed eternal " enmity to earthly kings, they impiouſly aſſail the throne of " Heaven, and, rather than confeſs a greater than themſelves, " oh, horrid, horrid thought! deny their God!"

The glaring *anachroniſm* the author has committed by interweaving the Events of the Eighteenth Century with the ſuppoſed tranſactions of the Fourteenth, we have ſufficiently expatiated upon in our laſt Number.

foreign

foreign to her heart, *Guntram* remains inflexible, and with brutal harſhneſs threatens to drag her to the altar, if ſhe refuſes her aſſent. *Darbony* himſelf appears affected with the diſtreſs of his intended bride, which he hopes to cure by a ſong. The ſweetneſs of the melody is delightful, and the ſtyle in which INCLEDON acquits himſelf cannot fail to command the applauſe of every perſon capable of being moved with the "concord of ſweet ſounds." We would only requeſt of him to be more attentive to verbal accuracy. He uniformly deſtroys the ſenſe by ſubſtituting the word *cure*, inſtead of *ſweet*, in the concluding line of the laſt ſtanza:

"A ſweet, that heals the ſmart."

We cannot however diſmiſs this ſong, without expreſſing our indignation at the illiberal oppoſition, (evidently originating in profeſſional jealouſy and envy) made by a noiſy *junto* every time the audience command this charming ſong to be *encored*. We pity the dull ears that can find delectation in *rattle-trap* and *jingle*, but are incapable of deriving pleaſure from the combined efforts of *taſte* and *ſcience*.

Guntram perſiſts in his determination to eſpouſe his daughter to *Darbony*. *Eloiſa* finding oppoſition fruitleſs, has no reſource left but the interpoſition of heaven, and her hopes of ſuccour from *Philip*. "Fly to *Belmont*, and tell my *Philip*, without his aid, his *Eloiſa* is loſt to him for ever." The *Hermit* deeply

deeply intereſted in her fate, reſolves to be himſelf, old and infirm as he is, the bearer of her meſſage.

SCENE III. is, beyond controverſy ſuperior to all the reſt in intereſt, *pathos*, and effect. The incidents are ſkilfully managed, and the ſenſibility of the audience is wrought upon with progreſſive energy. It diſcovers an apartment in *Belmont Caſtle*. *Albert* is brought in chains before *Wenzel*, who has ſtipulated with *Lazarra* for the grant of *Belmont* as the price of *Albert's* head. This paves the way to a ſcene of exquiſite diſtreſs between *Philip* and his ſanguinary parent. But as we have ſufficiently detailed the leading features of this interview in our former Number, we ſhall not enter into a recapitulation. Suffice it to ſay, that the whole of this part diſplays the hand of a maſter, though at the ſame time it muſt be owned, that it ſerves, like a cruel *foil*, to expoſe in aggravated colours the deformity of the reſt. We likewiſe noticed a grammatical blunder which we beg leave to point out for correction. *Philip*, after his father is father is carried off in a fit (this is an incident in a great meaſure *novel* to the ſtage, and might admit of conſiderable improvement) addreſſes the guards: "Can you doubt if (*whether*) heaven forbids you to take the life of this good man?"

ACT IV. opens with a rural proſpect. Miſs * WATERS's plaintive ditty has been totally cancelled

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*In rigid conformity with the declaration made by the Editor of The DRAMATIC CENSOR, in the *preamble* or *proſpectus* to the First Number of this work, that every remonſtrance advanced with temper and duly accredited, ſhould meet with proper attention and redreſs of grievance, the Editor with pleaſure acknowledges, that his remarks on Miſs WATERS in No. III appear, from ſubſequent information, to have been too harſh and ſevere. It was, it ſeems, expreſsly ſtipulated with the author, that the part of *Eugene* ſhould be re-written as a *female* character. This promiſe Miſs WATERS, whoſe dreſs we have ſo amply commented upon in our laſt, fully replied upon. She had no idea that a gentleman would be guilty of a direct breach of faith; nor was it till the very day preceding the repreſentation of the New Drama, that ſhe was undeceived in this reſpect. Remonſtrances were made, but the only anſwer vouchſaved in a *certain* quarter, was the ſapient queſtion: "*what has honour to do with a Theatre?*" A refuſal to undertake the part was the natural reſult; but the *authoritative* hint, "Madam, you know the conſequence" (an increaſed fine of 30l.) enforced compliance.

Having touched upon this ſubject, we cannot refrain from teſtifying our diſapprobation of the *tyrannical ſyſtem*, which has lately been introduced into the management of — — — —. It argues a puſillanimous illiberality of mind in an actor, who owes all his ſucceſs to public favour (and that favour avowedly acquired, not by the moſt brilliant diſplay of profeſſional talents, but by *monkey tricks*, by jumping over chairs and tables, ſtroking his chin, and *pulling up his inexpreſſibles*) to conſpire againſt the intereſts of his fellow labourers in the vocation. But let the gentleman alluded to bear in mind, that eventually he is *undermining himſelf*—for well may he reſt aſſured, that *individually* he is much inferior to the major part of thoſe

celled ſince the firſt repreſentation. This is an alteration we greatly approve of, as the part has no connection with the general intereſt of the piece, and the words of the ſong are a diſgrace to Mr. CUMBERLAND'S pen. The true *namby-pamby* ſtyle was never more ſucceſsfully hit off. And as to the firſt line of the concluding ſtanza:

"But theſe happy hours are gone by."

we defy the author himſelf to diſcover the metre.

The *Hermit*, in purſuance of the reſolution he has formed to reſcue *Eloiſa* from the odious embraces of *Darbony*, practiſes the *pious fraud* (in plain Engliſh tells a downright lie, for which he eaſily quiets his qualms of conſcience, by "leaving the *cauſe* to ſanctify the *means*) the abſurdity of which we amply commented upon in our laſt. *Guntram*, after juſtly diſcrediting a tale of ſuch palpable improbability, is ſatisfied at laſt by a clumſy compliment paid to his character, though he ſtill appears to think the buſineſs rather ſtrange and marvellous: "I doubted if (*whether*) Lord *Albert* might ſee my character in the ſame light as you do." The ſtratagem, however, ſucceeds, becauſe it was *neceſſary* for the author's plan that it ſhould, and *Ellen* elopes with the *Hermit*. SCENE

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whom he ſeeks to oppreſs: and further we would beg leave to preſs upon his moſt ſerious attention the infallible aphoriſm: "A houſe divided againſt itſelf can never ſtand!" A future opportunity will preſent for enlarging with CENSORIAL BOLDNESS on this topic.

SCENE II. discovers an apartment in *Thurn* Castle. An interview takes place between *Lazarro* and the Lady *Joanna*, which terminates little to the satisfaction of the Knight. The only favour the lady will condescend to ask, is leave to be *buried alive!* "Let there be dug a grave where *Albert* fell, and in that spot, made sacred by his blood, let me be buried."

SCENE III. presents a wild and rocky landscape. *Wolf* marshalls his band of peasants, who *cut a figure* (if we may be permitted to use the homely but energetic phrase) truly *grotesque* and ludicrous. To heighten the farce, *Wolf* addresses them in a speech interlarded with jokes and conundrums. TOWNSEND follows with a humourous song, which relieves the dulness of the scene, and the *aukward squad* file off to attack the Castle.

The coast being thus left clear, *Philip* is next discovered leading Lord *Albert* through the subterraneous passages communicating with the dungeon, in which he had been confined by *Wenzel*'s orders. *Albert*, who from the time appointed for his execution cannot have been above an hour in his prison, is nevertheless so entirely overpowered by the damp vapour of his cell, that he is on the point of fainting the moment he breathes fresh air. To prevent a disaster of this nature *Philip* thrusts him into a cave, where he leaves him to enjoy the cool invigorating breeze, meanwhile that he himself

goes

goes in queſt of a confederate troop of mountaineers, by whoſe aid he hopes to effect *Albert*'s reſtoration to his rights.

Eloiſa and the *Hermit* now make their appearance. The former enters the cave into which *Albert* had been thruſt by *Philip*, and ſeeing the *Lord of Thurn* ſtretched at full length on the ground, concludes him to be dead, or elſe miſtakes him for a ghoſt. She accordingly utters a loud ſcream, which rouſes *Albert*, and the *Hermit* to her aſſiſtance. In the interview which now takes place, *Albert* relates his obligations to *Philip*, which greatly raiſe the character of that gallant youth in *Eloiſa*'s eſteem, and then proceeds to a voluntary diſcloſure of the illegal tenure by which he holds the caſtle and domain of *Thurn*. This declaration he accompanies with a ſolemn vow of reſtitution, the moment the rightful proprietor of *Thurn* ſhall be found. The *Hermit* takes advantage of this favourable opportunity to reveal himſelf as the baniſhed *Theodore*, whom *Albert*'s father had diſpoſſeſſed of his inheritance.

Whilſt theſe three are engaged in this intereſting converſation, *Darbony* with a detachment of his party breaks in upon their ſecurity. *Eloiſa* is carried off by force, but *Darbony* ſpares the life of *Albert*, whom, as he very juſtly obſerves (and the remark comes with uncommonly good grace from the mouth of a hardened cut-throat and robber) he has ſufficiently wronged already. Scarcely has *Darbony* quitted the place, before *Philip* and his confederated

confederates, with *Wolf's aukward ſquad* make their appearance. *Albert* being unarmed, receives a ſword from *Wolf*, and away they all march to battle.

In the conflict which enſues, the *Hermit* acts the very part which CORY ſuſtains in *Pizarro*, with the aſſiſtance of his grand-ſon. This is ſuch a palpable and ſervile imitation, that the mind revolts with diſguſt from a tale *twice-told*. *Albert's* troops prove ſucceſsful; *Eloiſa* is reſcued, and *Darbony*, the leader of the banditti, made priſoner. *Wolf*, with his *lamb-like* thirſt for blood, (he is not "*wolf by nature!*") pleads hard for leave to "open a vein" in *Darbony's* body; but *Albert* interpoſes: "He ſaved my life, I now will preſerve his." *Darbony* in return for this generous conduct makes a full diſcovery of *Eloiſa's* real parentage and rank, who proves to be the daughter of the old *Hermit*, now acknowledged as *Theodore*, the lawful Lord of *Thurn*. An affecting recognition between the father and his child terminates the Act.

ACT V. commences with the review and march of *Albert's* troops to attack *La arra*. It now occurs to *Albert*, that he was too precipitate in his retreat from *Thurn*, and his mind is oppreſſed with "dread of what has befel (*befallen*) the poor dear objects in the caſtle" (meaning his wife and child) whom he ſo *gallantly* left to take their chance. As

a woman would be an incumbrance rather than a help-mate in warlike operations, *Eloiſa* is left in cuſtody with her father, who refuſes to accept of any guard for their mutual defence, as he is provided with a dagger, and as his daughter aſſures him, that ſhe knows of a very ſnug, comfortable and private arbour, in which her lover *Philip* uſed to meet her at midnight. *Albert* accordingly departs with his adherents.

SCENE II. preſents an interior view of *Thurn* caſtle. *Lazarra*, confident of *Albert*'s death, ſummons *Joanna* to meet him, for the expreſs purpoſe of deciding her fate, whether ſhe ſhall be "his *victim*, or his *bride*." At this critical moment a meſſenger announces the defeat and capture of *Darbony*. This welcome piece of news is ſucceeded by the intelligence of *Albert*'s eſcape from *Belmont*: and another meſſenger brings word that the caſtle is attacked.

Joanna is next diſcovered flying in wild diſorder through the apartments of the caſtle, not knowing whither to betake herſelf for ſafety, when *Wolf* enters and deſires her to come along with him, as the caſtle is now reconquered.

SCENE III. conſiſts entirely of fighting. *Lazarra*'s troops are diſcomfited. *Wenzel* is on the point of falling beneath *Albert*'s ſword, when *Philip* ruſhes between the combatants, and ſupplicates the conqueror

conqueror. *Albert* grants his requeſt, but with the expreſs condition, that *Wenzel* ſhall never ſhow his face again in his territories. *Wolf* and *Guntram* next encounter each other; but the *Old Fox* ſaves his life by an artifice, at once as clumſy and ſucceſsful as the ſtratagem, to which *Wolf* owed his eſcape in the Second Act. He preſents the ring, by which the *Hermit* had *cozened* him out of his reputed daughter, to *Wolf*, as an earneſt of pardon from Lord *Albert*, and whilſt *Wolf* is curiouſly examining the gem, his priſoner very cunningly ſneaks away.

Lazarra and *Albert* now decide their quarrel by perſonal combat. A very neceſſary alteration has been made in the management of this duel ſince the firſt night. Inſtead of *Lazarra*'s defeating *Albert*, and *Joanna* then ruſhing in to her lord's aſſiſtance, and ſtabbing his victorious antagoniſt to the heart (an imitation of *Elvira* iu The *Caſtle Spectre*, too groſs and palpable to eſcape animadverſion) *Albert* now owes his triumph entirely to his own ſkill and good fortnne. Having diſpatched his enemy, he very *naturally* enquires after his wife in the field of battle, and *Joanna* (who in the *Second Scene* had put herſelf under *Wolf*'s protection, though that gentleman ſeems to have deſerted his charge) as *naturally* leaves the caſtle and flies to the field of battle for ſafety. The *finale* then follows, by way

of *Te Deum*, and the curtain drops to the roar of trumpets, drums, fiddles, fifes, and tabors.

After this ample *analyſis*, we proceed to a general *Criticiſm* of the New Play. But the length to which we have extended our remarks, compels us reluctantly to defer this part of our plan, together with our report of the merits of the Performers, till our next.

DRURY-LANE, *Wedneſday, Jan.* 22, 1800.

A BOLD STROKE FOR A WIFE. (*Mrs. Centlivre.*)

The PRIZE. (*P. Hoare.*)

The attractions of the *Royal Viſit* filled every part of the theatre before the curtain drew up. The decorations, in compliment to their Majeſties, were remarkably ſplendid and ſuperb. The loyal ſong of *God ſave the King* was ſung, and each time *encored*, both at the beginning and end of the performances. Between the Play and the Farce, *Rule Britannia* was played and encored.

With reſpect to the performance itſelf, BANNISTER and SUETT ſtrangely over-acted their parts. It was that ſpecies of performance, which has received the technical appellation of *mumming*. Miſs MELLON appeared in a very elegant dreſs, as *Anne Lovely*, and played with much ſpirit.

Miſs DE CAMP, in the Entertainment, was deſervedly *encored* in her *mock Italian* ſong.

COVENT-GARDEN, *Thurſday, Jan.* 23, 1800.

The BIRTH DAY. (*Altered from Kotzebue, by T. Dibdin.*) The HORSE AND THE WIDOW. (*Ditto.*) VOLCANO.

DRURY-LANE, *Thurſday, Jan.* 23, 1800.

The WHEEL OF FORTUNE. (*Cumberland.*) LODOISKA. (*J. P. Kemble.*)

It conſtitutes a kind of literary paradox, by what ſtrange fatality the man, whoſe mental powers are competent to produce an original drama like the *Wheel of Fortune*, could ever be the author, in any ſhape whatever, of ſuch a vile, incongruous maſs of abſurdity, as *Joanna*.

COVENT-GARDEN, *Thurſday, Jan.* 23, 1800.

JOANMA. (*Cumberland.*) VOLCANO.

Of theſe two pantomimes, the one which honeſtly avows to the character, appears to poſſeſs greater

greater attractions with the public, than its *diſguiſed* rival.

Mr. CLAREMONT continues to perform the part of Lord *Albert*.

*** The Review of the GERMAN THEATRE, is unavoidably poſtponed till our next. Our readers will do us the juſtice to believe, that it is with conſiderable reluctance we again treſpaſs upon their indulgence for this repeated procraſtination; but they may reſt aſſured when we do take the work in hand, we ſhall not treat it in a ſuperficial manner.

†‡† The Patrons of the DRAMATIC CENSOR are reſpectfully informed, that an *Engraved Title Page* to the Work will be given *gratis* at the end of the Firſt Volume, which will be completed with the lapſe of three months.

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